

Britain condemned again on mental patients' rights

The Government was found yesterday to have broken the European human rights convention for the seventh time by denying mental patients proper rights of appeal against their detention.

In a unanimous decision, seven judges of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg said that the United Kingdom had broken Article 5 (4), which says that anyone deprived of his liberty should be able to challenge that in a court. It is the third time this year that the court has judged Britain to be in breach of the convention.

Yesterday MIND, the mental health charity, called on ministers to change the law to give the 4,000 compulsorily detained mental patients the right to a hearing in a court or independent judicial body.

At present, they can appeal to a mental health review tribunal, which can then recommend release to the Home Secretary. But the Home Secretary has the final say.

Mr Larry Gostin, MIND's legal director, said: "The importance of this case is that it goes to the heart of the way we take our decisions, with the Home Secretary making up his mind behind closed doors, not giving his reasons or hearing from the person concerned. It is against the rules of natural justice."

It is understood that the Mental Health (Amendment) Bill, which has been drafted to reform the 22-year-old mental health legislation and will be published shortly, does not meet the criticisms of the European judges. It is likely to be amended further during the passage of the Bill through Parliament.

MIND said the decision was a landmark in the history of mental health and would revolutionize thinking about mental health legislation, as well as about the Home Secretary's discretion in other areas, such as immigration and parole.

"The case is of fundamental and constitutional importance," Mr Gostin said.

The judgment also cast doubt on the effectiveness of the ancient writ of Habeas Corpus, whereby individuals are theoretically able to challenge their detention. The Strasbourg court said it did not provide a sufficient remedy in this case.

The patient in this case, whose name is not being released but who was represented in Strasbourg by Mr Michael Napier, a Sheffield solicitor, is now dead. He was recalled to Broadmoor, top security hospital after having been conditionally discharged for three years, but was not given reasons for his arrest.

The Home Office has now changed the arrangements for recalling patients so that they are told why they are being brought back to hospital. The man had been recalled to Broadmoor after a non-violent argument with his wife and then spent two more years in the hospital, leaving in 1976.

He had originally been sent to Broadmoor after a conviction of wounding with intent in 1968, but he was never able to have that decision reviewed by an independent body.

"It is a tremendous victory after seven-and-a-half years' work," Mr Napier said. "I cannot ask what my client feels because he is not here, but his family will probably feel they are very pleased when they hear."

The family are expected to seek compensation in the case. The court found that the man was not unjustifiably deprived of his liberty and that the recall was justified as an emergency measure. It therefore found there was no violation of Article 5(1).

Papal Mass will be at Wembley Stadium

The big London event of the Pope's visit to Britain next spring will be a Mass at Wembley Stadium, not Richmond Park, as previously planned.

Cardinal Home, Archbishop of Westminster, said yesterday this was one of the results of "scaling down" the visit in the light of the Pope's state of health, and the need to restrain the cost of the visit.

The Pope will arrive at Gatwick Airport on May 28. His provisional itinerary still includes Coventry, Manchester, York, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Cardiff, from where he returns to Rome.

In Coventry, a Mass will be celebrated at Baginbun Airport on Whit Sunday. The Pope will also preside at Mass in Manchester and hold a celebration in Liverpool and York, before flying north for the Scottish part of his visit. That will be organized by the Scottish bishops.

His pilgrimage to Canterbury Cathedral as the guest of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, remains the ecumenical high spot of the visit, which is also likely to include a courtesy call on the Queen. The details of that, the Cardinal said, have still to be worked out between Buckingham Palace and the Vatican.

The Pope recently emphasized the ecumenical dimension to his visit, the Cardinal said, although it was officially "a pastoral visit to the Roman Catholic community in Britain."

The Cardinal, who said the bishops of England and Wales were preparing to send back ground material to the Pope, believed the visit meant a great deal to him.

"It is a very personal thing. He really is anxious to come to us. I think he has a very considerable respect for this country, and a great interest in us."

Cardinal Home was speaking at a press conference at the conclusion of a meeting of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, which discussed the itinerary of the visit.



A November 5 theatrical celebration in Catford, London, last night, included a fireworks tableau of Parliament in flames. It was commissioned by Labour-controlled Lewisham Council with cash help from the Arts Council.

Costs fail to deter motorists

Private motoring increased in popularity as Britain's main form of passenger transport in the last ten years despite big increases in motoring costs.

Rose by 23 per cent in 1980 alone, its share of passenger movement rose from 76 to 82 per cent in the decade, while the railways' share fell from 14 to 7 per cent, said bus and coach industry figures.

Average household spending on transport rose to over £15 a week or 15 per cent of domestic expenditure last year, compared with £13 a week or 14 per cent the year before.

Of that, £13.50 (10.50 in 1979) went on buying and running cars, £1.09 on bus fares (93p in 1979), and 80p (56p in 1979) on rail fares.

But in terms of the actual number of journeys made, road transport remained the most common form of travel, with two out of five.

About 81.9 per cent of freight movements went by road (84.1 per cent in 1970, 82.5 per cent in 1979); 5.2 per cent by rail (10.9 per cent in 1970, 9.3 per cent in 1979); and the remainder by coastal shipping, waterways, and pipeline.

Surgeon 'committed professional suicide'

Paul Vickers, the surgeon charged with murdering his wife, agreed with the Crown yesterday that to entrust to Miss Pamela Collison, his former mistress, a prescription made out in a false name was professional suicide.

Miss Collison, aged 34, of Margaret Road, New Barnet, Herts, is jointly charged with Mrs Margaret Vickers' murder. Both deny the charge.

Mr Harry Ognall, QC, for the prosecution, said in cross-examination at Teesside Crown Court that Mr Vickers was a member of the ethical committee of the General Medical Council.

Mr Vickers, of Moor Crescent, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, agreed that in writing a prescription intended for his wife in the name of Mrs Alabaster amounted to professional misconduct. He said he would have considerable sympathy for anybody who used an alternative name for a relative.

Mr Ognall asked: "If this had been discovered would you expect to have been hauled up before the committee?"

Mr Vickers said he would and Mr Ognall suggested that not only would that have ruined his professional character but would have sounded the deathknell of his political ambitions too.

Mr Vickers said: "Absolutely right."

Mr Ognall said that to accede to Miss Collison's proposal that he make out a prescription in a false name was a passport to potential disaster.

He added: "I want to inquire as to the woman you entrusted that passport. I am concerned with your assessment, as given by you to this court, of Pamela Collison up to this time, September 12, when you agreed to this proposal, which was professional suicide. The person into whose hands you put your professional life."

She was hysterical from time to time," Mr Ognall said. She would cry out "rape" quite falsely. Miss Collison was, if Mr Vickers' evidence was accepted, perverted in her sexual liaisons. She was a woman in Mr Vickers' judgment, mentally disturbed, totally amoral, with no perception of right or wrong.

"She could be a screaming fiend, sometimes. She was always striving for dominance, including domination over you."

Mr Vickers accepted that this was his assessment of the woman with the exception of the amoral charge.

Mr Ognall said Miss Collison had also been blackmailing Mr Vickers since early 1978. Mr Vickers said: "On the strict definition not. On the less strict definition, there was an element of obtaining money or goods by threat."

Mr Ognall said: "Here was this woman blackmailing you in the broadest sense of the word, disturbed from time to time, very indiscreet but a woman who on occasion you felt should be in Broadmoor and when she suggests you write out a fake prescription without demur, you do so."

Mr Vickers replied: "As the time of writing it, I hope my previous behaviour was reformed. I didn't see what was coming."

Referring to letters written to Miss Collison by Vickers, Mr Ognall read a passage which said: "No news is bad news. Obviously we must continue taking the medicine."

Asked to explain, Mr Vickers said: "To put it in vulgar language, I contracted a 'dose' and I was treating both myself and herself. There is no other interpretation." The judge, Mr Justice Boreham, said that by a "dose," he meant venereal disease.

Mr Ognall said: "I suggest you are referring to the drugs being taken by your wife, that is why no news is bad news."

The case was adjourned until today.

FIREWORK JOKE MISFIRED

A firework explosion in a car planned as a practical joke misfired because the victim was the son of a diplomat with the Irish Republic's Embassy.

Robert Knight, aged 21, of Rangefield Road, Bromley, south London, placed a theatrical maroon under the bonnet of a car belonging to Mr Felim O'Brien, aged 21, of Orpington, son of Mr John O'Brien, First Secretary, Agriculture, at the Embassy.

The anti-terrorist squad was called in when the firework went off. Bromley magistrates were told yesterday.

Mr Knight admitted criminal damage and was given a 28-day jail sentence suspended for a year.

Relief for ratepayers when snow lies deep and even

However much snow may fall on the east of England this winter, the ratepayers of Suffolk will escape the considerable cost of keeping their rural highways and byways open to traffic. Suffolk County Council has managed to persuade nearly 200 farmers to turn out their ploughs and tractors to clear snow and not charge the county a penny.

Until recently the council had an agreement with farmers, approved by the National Farmers' Union, to pay a countywide total fee of £1,200 an hour for snow clearance. On some days during the 1978-79

NEW TALKS SOUGHT IN TOXTETH

Mr Kenneth Oxford, Chief Constable of Merseyside, who was abused and hit with a placard after a meeting with Toxteth community leaders to discuss the summer's rioting, is to meet them again.

In a letter to ethnic minority leaders, Mr Oxford has promised to bring new proposals for policing in Liverpool's inner city area.

Explaining the plan's delay, he said talks must first be held with the Merseyside Police Authority and Lord Scarman's report had to be read. Recent attacks on policemen had also led to the plan being delayed.

IRAN STUDENTS SENTENCED

Eighteen students from Iran who took over their London consulate in September were each conditionally discharged for three years and ordered to pay £130 compensation at West London Magistrates' Court yesterday.

The students admitted trespassing, one admitted aiding and abetting and received a similar sentence. During the short occupation an estimated £7,000 worth of damage was caused. There was a peaceful demonstration outside the court by a group carrying placards saying "Release the Iranians" and "Drop the charges".

Competition on 'Green Giant' site

The eastward or downstream site, formerly owned by European Ferries, was intended for a 600ft tower block of offices, the "Green Giant". Plans for the scheme which aroused fierce controversy and were rejected last year.

Although the combined sites, which include the Nine Elms cold store at the westward end, present a largely derelict appearance, they are regarded as among the most important in the capital.

The competition will be for a mixed development of offices, flats, shops, leisure facilities and public open space, and the estimated cost is put at between £80m and £90m.

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MURDER OF EX-SPY UNSOLVED

A former British spy and friend of Kim Philby, the KGB mole, was the victim of an unsolved homosexual murder, a London inquest was told yesterday.

Forty prostitutes had been detained during investigations of the killing of Mr Henry Carr, aged 51, but no one had been charged, Supt Brian Sargent told Westminster coroners court. Mr Carr was found naked and stabbed in his burning flat at Cathcart Road, Kensington last February.

Mr Paul Kuypman, the coroner, recorded a verdict of unlawful killing.

Mr Carr, a former Foreign Office diplomat who was believed to have worked as an agent for the KGB, retired from the Foreign Office in 1969. He was the divorced father of two children.

After his retirement his health worsened. "He had deteriorated to such a state, he was almost permanently drinking in one pub or another," Mr Sargent said.

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The Cortina L whilst having the same engine variants (incidentally, both models are fitted with Ford's economical variable venturi carburettor) also offers a 45 amp alternator and halogen headlamps.

In the GL and Ghia models you can still select a 1600cc powerplant, or you could decide on something with a little more oomph. And if you do, you'll be putting your foot down on either 2, or 2.3 litres of twin venturi carburetted engine.

What makes the Cortina so individual?

Historically, the standard of equipment inside the more luxurious Cortinas has been the envy of other car manufacturers. In particular the Ghia with its Chatsworth and crushed Velour fabric

seat trim, head restraints, radio/stereo-cassette, tachometer, quartz clock, full centre console, wood veneer door cappings, tinted glass, and so on.

But whatever Cortina you decide on, the beauty is you can virtually mix and match the options to your hearts content, tailoring the car just the way you want it.

What more can we say but list some of the 1982 improvements?

You'll hardly ever need to look under the bonnet, but from an admiring neighbours point of view, the Ghia is now

fitted with an engine compartment light.

The whole range gets illuminated rear window and hazard warning switches and models fitted with centre consoles even get illuminated ash trays. (How decadent!) The L gets York trim, the GL gets Chelsea/Velour fabric trim, and the new head restraints in the L, GL and Ghia are fully adjustable.

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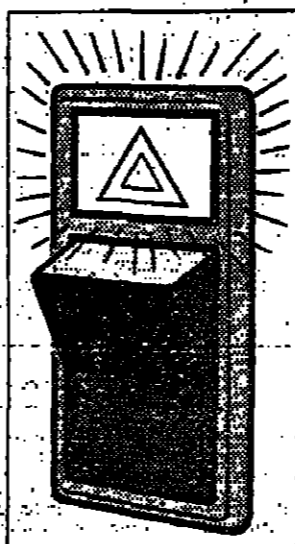
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by A. J. Aver

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November, 1924, and who
are entitled to share in the
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for the purposes mentioned
in the said Act, are hereby
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day of October, 1925.

WILLIAM GIMBLE
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Legislature of the State of
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of the said State, and that
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on the 27th day of October
1925.

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1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 277: 1005-1010, 1997.

